DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 051 138 24 SP 005 041

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TITLE	Pupil Evaluation of Student Teachers and Their Supervisors.
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SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO	BR-5-0249
PUB DATE	Jun 69
CONTRACT	OEC-6-10-108
NOTE	6p.; Report Series No. 17
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Analysis of Variance, *Cooperating Teachers, Secondary School Teachers, *Student Opinion, *Student Teachers, *Teacher Education, *Teacher Evaluation

ABSTRACT

This report is the first completed study from a larger project called Teacher Aides in a Secondary School. Pupils in 55 seventh-grade public school classes completed the Pupil Observation Survey Report (POSR) twice--once to describe their student teacher and once to describe the regular (cooperating-supervising) teacher. All teachers involved were female. Analyses of variance of the six factor dimensions of the POSR indicated that the student teachers were seen as more friendly, cheerful, lively, interesting, and directive, but as less poised, knowledgeable, and firmly controlling than their supervisors. The difference in general evaluation of the two groups was not significant. Correlations between the POSR scores of the student teachers and their supervisors were significant only for the factors called Non-Directive (r=.57) and Firm Control (r-.29). These results are consistent with the hypothesis that the regular teachers "set" the classroom atmosphere and activity structure before the student teacher arrives on the scene to handle the class by herself. The findings are relevant to any research employing pupil evaluation of teacher behavior and support the validity of the POSR as a specific tool for such measurement. (Author)

ED051138

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Report Series No. 17

June, 1969

The Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

SP005041

The research reported herein was supported by USOE Contract OE 6-10-108, The R&D Center for Teacher Education at The University of Texas.

This is a preprint of an article accepted for publication by the Journal of Teacher Education.

PUPIL EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS AND THEIR SUPERVISORS

Donald J. Veldman

Pupil evaluations of teacher behavior have been widely used as criteria in educational research for many years, particularly in the field of higher education. At the high school level, pupil evaluations have often been employed as measures of student teacher behavior in studies of teacher education programs. Very few studies, however, have included comparisons of the way in which pupils evaluate the behavior of experienced teachers, as compared to that of student teachers in the same settings. Such comparisons may be formulated in terms of two quite different general questions: (1) Do student teachers and cooperating (supervising) teachers differ in their average levels of evaluation by pupils? (2) Is there a correlation between the evaluation by pupils of student teachers and their supervisors? The latter question concerns possible influences of cooperating teachers upon the classroom behavior of the trainees for whom they are responsible.

Tangential evidence on the former question is the report by Remmers (1929) that college instructors with more teaching experience are rated higher by their students than are less experienced instructors. With regard to the influence of experienced teachers upon trainees, Bills, Macagnoni, and Elliot (1964) reported that the "openness" of student teachers dropped significantly during their student teaching semesters, and that these changes were significantly related to the openness of their public-school cooperating teachers, but not to that of their university supervisors.

The present study represents an attempt to provide data directly relevant to the two questions posed earlier regarding the relationships between pupil evaluations of student teachers and their supervisors. The instrument used in the present study to measure pupils' perceptions of teacher behavior was the Pupil Observation Survey Report (POSR). The development and validation of this 38-item questionnaire has been described elsewhere in detail (Veldman & Peck, 1963, 1964, in press). Class means for each item are used to compute composite scores for each of six factor dimensions derived from analysis of a normative sample of 609 student teachers at The University of Texas. The descriptive labels for these factors may be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Analyses of Variance Comparing 62 Student Teachers with Their Supervisors on Each POSR Factor

POSR Factor	Student Mean	Supervisor Mean	F Ratio	P Level	Percent Variation
V1 Friendly and Cheerful	45	31	30.07	<.0001	21.0
V2 Knowledgeable and Poised	49	59	24.38	.0001	17.5
V3 Lively and Interesting	50	43	15.77	.0004	10.1
V4 Firm Control	43	55	36.53	<.0001	18.7
V5 Non-Directive	44	48	11.40	.002	3.9
PA General Evaluation	43	39	3.12	.08	2.0

Procedure and Results

In 55 seventh-grade public-school classes in Austin, Texas, pupils were asked to complete the POSR instrument twice -- once to describe their regular (cooperating) teacher, and once to describe the student teacher assigned there that semester. All teachers involved were female.

To answer the first of the questions posed earlier, a repeated measures analysis of variance (df = 1 and 54) was computed for each of the dependent POSR factor variables.

The results of these analyses, which are summarized in Table 1, showed substantial differences in the way pupils perceived the student teachers and their supervisors. The supervisors were considered less friendly and cheerful, less lively and interesting, more poised and knowledgeable, more firmly controlling, and somewhat less directive than the student teachers assigned to them. There was a tendency for pupils to prefer the student teachers over their supervisors, but it did not reach an acceptable level of statistical significance. The percentages of variation shown in Table 1 represent the extent to which the variance of each dependent variable (POSR factor) was "explained" by the independent variable (teacher type). A full explanation of this method may be found in Kirk (1968, page 134). All other computational procedures are detailed in Veldman (1967).

The second of the general questions posed earlier was answered by computing correlation coefficients between student and supervisor scores (N = 55 classes) for each of the POSR factor variables. The results were as follows:

V1	Friendly and Cheerful	$r = .00$
V2	Knowledgeable and Poised	$r = .00$
V3	Lively and Interesting	$r = .17$
V4	Firm Control	$r = .29$ $(p < .05)$
V5	Non-Directive	$r = .57$ $(p < .01)$
PA	General Evaluation	$r = -.07$

There is no evidence that supervisors influence the behavior of their student teachers appreciably, if we accept the reports of the pupils as valid descriptions of the classroom behavior concerned. There <u>is</u> evidence to support the idea that supervisors "set" the classroom atmosphere with regard to the structure of class activities and student participation, since student teachers do not begin to teach until a few weeks after the semester has begun and such parameters have been established by the supervising teacher.

Summary

Statistical comparison of 55 supervising (cooperating) teachers with the student teachers assigned to them was carried out using the six factor variables of the Pupil Observation Survey Report, which summarizes pupil evaluations of teachers' classroom behavior.

The supervisors were considered less friendly, cheerful, lively, interesting, and directive, but more poised, knowledgeable, and firm than the student teachers. The difference in general preference for the two groups was relatively minor. Correlational evidence supported the notion that supervising teachers "set" the classroom atmosphere with regard to pupil participation in decisions about class activity, and that this aspect of the student teachers' behavior is not independent of that of the supervisors to whom they are assigned.

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